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Boston, Mass., Oct. 22d, 1898.

Mr. Samuel Gamble President Continental Clothing Co., Omaha.

Dear Sir: After careful consideration we have decided to accept your final offer to close out our entire stock of fall and winter suits for gentlemen, made by us within the past six or seven days. The suits and overcoats included are all of the best manufacture ever produced in our work rooms and at your offer we do not realize more than 60 per cent of their actual cash value. Yours truly S. W. Loomis & Co.

THE CONTINENTAL CLOTHING CO. N. E. COR. 15TH AND DOUGLAS.

CAPITAL OF THE MAGELLANS

How People Live and Do Business in the Lowest City on the Globe.

PUNTA ARENAS A REAL BOOM TOWN

Lots Sold for a Postage Stamp Now Worth Thousands of Dollars—Town and Country Life and Character.

(Copyright, 1898, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

PUNTA ARENAS, Patagonia, Sept. 24.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—Punta Arenas is the southernmost city of the world. It is at the bottom of the South American continent, 1,200 miles nearer the south pole than Cape Town, at the lowest end of Africa. It is 7,000 miles south of New York and its latitude is that of Labrador. Still its winters are warmer than those of Washington city and just now, at the coldest, everything is covered with green.

Situated on the northern coast of the Strait of Magellan, midway between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, more than a hundred miles north of Cape Horn, Punta Arenas is the commercial capital of a vast region of sea and land which is almost unknown to the rest of the world. From where I write I can see the blue forests of Tierra del Fuego, on the opposite side of the strait. There are a vast number of smaller islands about it, and behind me, stretching away for hundreds of miles, are the mountains and sheep farms of Patagonia. There is no town of any size within 1,000 miles of this. We have no telegraphic connection with the rest of the world and the only news we get comes from the steamers passing through the Strait of Magellan. All of the supplies are brought here by steamers and many of the ships stop here to lay in new stores, as they go on their way from Australia to Europe or in passing to and from the east or west coast of South America. The city does a big business as a coaling station and it scruples not to put on the prices whenever it can. When the Oregon coasted here on her way home from the Pacific at the breaking out of the war she was charged 90 shillings or about \$22 a ton for coal, and her bill was more than \$20,000. Punta Arenas is a free port and quantities of provisions and other stores are brought here to supply the steamers and sailing vessels which pass through the Strait of Magellan. Just now there are English and German steamers on their way to and from Europe in the harbor loading and unloading freight. An American schooner from Boston, with a party of a dozen men en route for the Klondike, is taking in provisions and one of the ships of Grace & Co., bound for New York, passed by this morning. A steamer from New Zealand with a cargo of frozen sheep for London left yesterday. There are a number of wool schooners in the harbor and the little steam tug which carries passengers three times a week to and from Tierra del Fuego is just putting out on its voyage across the strait.

Frontier of the Hemisphere.

Punta Arenas lies right on the Strait of Magellan. There is a good harbor at this point, the land about which slopes gently upward from the water. Upon this has been built a straggling town more than a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide. Back of it there is a hill perhaps a hundred feet high and farther away in the rear you can see the last of the Andes, which here rise from 2,000 to 5,000 feet above the sea, their tops covered with snow. The city has been cut out of the woods and as you enter it you are reminded of the settlements of our wooded frontier of the northwest. It is just now one of the boom towns of this continent and its houses are scattered along wide streets with many gaps. These streets are a mass of black mud, pushing their huge oxen drag heavy carts, pushing them along by yokes fastened to their horns. Here the sidewalk is of concrete, there it is of wood and a little farther on you find it of mud and mud balance yourself on a log as you make your way over it. Many of the houses are built of sheets of corrugated iron, their walls wrinkled up like a washboard, and all have roofs of this material. A few are painted, but nearly all are of the gilded slaty color of the metal as it comes from the factory. None of the cheaper houses has a chimney. The stove pipes, which stick up through the roofs and which you see here and there coming out through the windows with upturned elbows, take their places. There is plenty of building space, but when you ask the prices of the vacant lots you find that property is very high. What would be a \$50 shanty in America is here worth \$500, and a good business corner will sell for several thousand dollars. Nevertheless within a few years these same lots were given away for a revenue stamp. The Chilean government was anxious to increase the size of the colony and it offered building sites to all who would erect houses and pay the 5-cent stamp which the law provides shall be upon every deed. "That lot," said a man to me today, as he pointed to a corner just above the Kosmos hotel, "cost me a postage stamp, and I hold it now at \$1,000." The days for such investments, however, are past and better buildings are going up every year. Now every inch of town property has a fixed value and there are several business blocks which would not be out of place in an American city.

There is one residence here which would be a mansion in the best part of Washington city. It is by all odds the finest house near the south pole. It has cost more than \$100,000 and its owner is a millionaire young, beautiful and accomplished. She is the sister of our consul here and the daughter of a Russian who made a large fortune in sheep raising. She got another fortune with her husband and she now owns thousands of acres of land and tens of thousands of sheep. Her house is situated on the plaza or public square. This is a grass plot of about two acres, fenced with a wooden paling. It has wide paths running through it and a band stand in the center. On the north side of it is the governor's house, a long brown two-story structure, with a wall of glass in the rear. On the west is a large frame building, the new barracks of the national guard, and on the east are some stores and the palace of this millionaire widow. It is made of red brick covered with stucco, so finished that it looks like a light brown stone. It has two stories and a mansard, with several towers and plenty of gingerbread work. The artists are now decorating it. They were imported from Buenos Ayres for the purpose, as were also the carpenters, the bricklayers and, in fact, all of the in-

horers connected with it. The brick were also imported. Every bit of the furniture will come from Europe and the house when finished will be as comfortable as any in Paris. It is, however, the only house of this kind in Punta Arenas, the most of the other dwellings being one-story structures, which could be built for from \$500 to \$1,000 in the United States. It shows you, however, that all of the people here at the tail end of creation are not poor. On the contrary, Punta Arenas has more rich men, perhaps, than any frontier town of its size in the world. It is the metropolis of the great sheep industry of southern Patagonia and there are rich sheep owners here who live almost as luxuriously as do our millionaire miners in Denver. There are thirty-three men and companies who each own and control from 25,000 to 2,500,000 acres of land. They have their sheep by the tens of thousands and several of them have an annual wool clip worth more than the salary of the president of the United States.

They are cosmopolitan. The citizens of Punta Arenas come from all parts of the world. You hear English, German and Spanish on every corner, and your ears are dinned with the jargon of the Austrian, the Italian and the Russian. Some of the richest of the people are Russian, and others are Scotchmen who have come from the Falkland Islands to engage in sheep farming here. There are treacherous Spaniards, smooth-tongued Argentines and hard-looking brigands from Chile. The lower classes are cherty sailors and shepherds, and among them you may find as many rough characters as in our mining camps of the west. There are no licensed gambling dens or sporting houses, but there are plenty of saloons, managed by hard-boiled young women, who sit at the doors during the day and smoke cigarettes. Knights of bearded men, with their trousers in their boots and clothes of all descriptions, are to be seen on the street. There are plenty of Spaniards and I have several times been warned to be careful as I go about after nightfall, as the Spanish knife has just now a magnetic attraction for the American's body and as most of these men are prone to stab in the back. The order kept is, however, very good, considering the population. The governor of the Magellans lives here. He is appointed by the president of Chile and he rules not only the Magellans, but the whole of the islands of the Tierra del Fuego archipelago. He has four hundred soldiers stationed in the city. You hear the military bands playing at 5 in the morning, when they begin their drill, and again at sunset or at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The soldiers act as the police. Each of them has a long sword at his side and he does not scruple to use it in making an arrest. Of late some of the soldiers have been using swords-cannies. You think they have nothing but a walking stick, but if you resist them they jerk the stick apart and give you a thrust under the fifth rib with a sharp blade of steel. I took a photograph of some of the policemen today in front of the court, or police station, and a moment later I met the governor coming out of the club and, with his permission, photographed him.

Town of Clubs.

It seems funny to think of a club down here on the Magellans. In the home of the guanaco, the seal, the whale and the naked aborigines! But Punta Arenas has its clubs, where the better classes of men meet for a social good time, a game of poker and a bit of liquid refreshment. The club is also the fire company, for here, as in many of these South American cities, the fire company is composed of the best men in the place. In Punta Arenas the club parlors are over the engine room. They are well furnished. They have two billiard tables, two poker rooms, a reading room and last but not least a bar. The bar is to be found in every club and in every hotel in South America. It is, as a rule, much patronized. At the German hotel where I am living in Punta Arenas you can get anything from a bottle of champagne to a Manhattan cocktail, from a sherry and biters to a glass of vermouth or a pousee cafe. There is a great deal of drinking at the hotel. We are so far south here that it is dark now at 4 p. m. The guests have no leaving place but the bar room and every night at about 4 sheep farmers, merchants, clerks and others drop in to get their nip before dinner. As dinner does not come until 6:30 they have plenty of time to fill up before that. The favorite method of buying drinks is by each man in the party throwing dice and the loser paying the bill. Liquors are very high here. This is so, notwithstanding that Punta Arenas is a free port and no duty is charged. Champagne costs twelve silver dollars a bottle. This last I know to my sorrow, for in a generous mood while talking sheep with a number of farmers last night I ordered champagne for the crowd. The bill was astounding.

Sheep Farming in Tierra del Fuego. You can't tell a man down here by his clothes. One of these sheep farmers, a young fellow of thirty, whose income runs into the tens of thousands, was once seen in a faded velvet suit, a 75-cent wool shirt, a slouch hat and a pair of high boots. Half the time his shirt is unbuttoned at the neck and to look at him you would not think him worth a cent. His sheep farm is as big as an Ohio county and at the last counting his sheep numbered 60,000 head. Another of the party was a young Englishman who was dressed in a costume that would not have been out of place in Hyde Park. He had well riding boots, with a well-cut suit of Scotch tweed. He was only an employe at a big sheep station. A third man was dressed much like an American business man. He was the manager of the biggest sheep ranch in Tierra del Fuego. He had the supervision of more than a hundred thousand sheep and a grazing territory of two and one-half million acres of land.

Sheep farming has now become the great industry of this part of the world. A large part of lower Patagonia is given up to it and all of the available lands in the Chilean territory of the Magellans, including Tierra del Fuego, have been either bought or leased. It will give you some idea of the growth of the industry when I tell you that in 1878, just twenty years ago, there were only 182 sheep in all the Magellans. Seven years later there were 40,000, and in 1892 the number had increased to 480,000. In 1895 it was estimated that there were 900,000 and now on this island alone there are considerably more than 1,000,000 sheep. The sheep farmers originally came here from the Falkland Islands, but since then Australians, French, Germans, Russians and others have joined with them in gobbling up the lands. The majority, however, are English and Scotch. One of the largest owners of sheep here is our American consul, who is also interested in many other things. His name is Maurice Bruce. He is a Russian by birth, but most of his life has been spent in the Magellans. He has 240,000 acres in Tierra del Fuego and is interested in a number of other large farms there and on the mainland. He is a young man, but possesses remarkable business ability and makes a very excellent consul.

On a Big Sheep Farm.

The management of one of these large sheep farms is interesting. Take that of the company which has two and one-half million acres in Tierra del Fuego. Its 100,000 sheep are divided into flocks of 2,000 each. Each flock has its pasture tract about six miles square allotted to it. This is just the size of many of our American townships, and if you will imagine a township as one field you will have an idea of the ordinary Tierra del Fuego pasture. This, to many of our farmers, would seem a large amount of land for this number of sheep, but the grass here is short, and in Tierra del Fuego from two to three acres of pasture are required for each sheep. Every flock has its own shepherd, who watches the sheep on horseback. He has a number of dogs which he so trains that they will catch his sheep. Most of the dogs are Scotch collies, which are very intelligent and which understand their masters almost as well as though they could understand language. When the shepherd makes a motion to the front they know that they are to go ahead, a motion to the rear calls them back and the raising of his hand in the air brings them to a standstill. Other motions send them to the right and left and, in fact, they act for him almost as well as if they were human beings. The shepherds are usually Scotchmen, who come here on five-year contracts at from \$25 to \$35 gold a month, with the understanding that they are to have meat, fuel and houses free. The meat is mutton, the fuel they cut themselves and their houses are little two or three-room shanties scattered over the farm. They do not have very hard work for most of the year. They have to feed the sheep. This is not hard, for all the feeding that the sheep gets is from the pasture, for the grass is always green on the Magellans and the sheep can graze in Tierra del Fuego all the year around.

Shearing Sheep by Steam.

They have a little harder work at shearing time, but here much of the work is done by professional shearers and the shepherds only assist. The shearing time begins in January and on a big sheep station it lasts for two months. The sheep are not washed before shearing. The wool is cleaned after it reaches the European market. The price paid the shearers is \$450 per hundred sheep, which rate a good man can make big wages. Within the last year or so some flocks in Tierra del Fuego have been sheared by steam. A set of knives or clippers, like those used by our barbers for clipping the hair short, is attached to a cord running on an overhead pulley and a man moves these clippers over the skin of the sheep, clipping off the wool. This is said to make a cleaner and closer job and does not cut the skin. After shearing the fleece are carefully spread out, being laid one on top of the other and so packed in bales of 200 pounds each. The most of the wool goes to the English markets, where it brings from 8 to 25 cents a pound. All of these large stations have their managers, overseers and bookkeepers. Nearly every one has a store, where its men can get their supplies, and every successful sheep station must be managed after

the best business methods. Sheep raising is by no means all profit. It takes money to make money here as well as elsewhere. I heard of one farmer who paid \$40,000 for "dip" last year. "Dip" is the term used for the fluid in which the sheep are washed several times a year to free them from the scabs. The scab is a parasite, which spreads so rapidly that it will infect a thousand sheep within a few days.

Profits of Sheep Raising.

And with all this does sheep farming pay? Yes, if you can get the land and the sheep. But the land about here and in Tierra del Fuego is all taken up, though I am told that there is some to be bought in Argentine Patagonia. Much of the Chilean land are held under lease from the government, but nearly all is in large tracts, which is necessary on account of the thinness of the pasture. Sheep here are worth on the average about \$2.50 gold a head. It is estimated that the ewes will produce an increase of 45 per cent of the flock a year, and taking the wool and the increase into consideration every sheep in the flock should net the proprietor about \$1 a year. The number of employes needed is comparatively small and this is being considerably reduced by fencing the pasture fields with wire. At present it takes a large capital to go into sheep raising in this part of the world, and considering everything I should say that the chances for the ordinary American farmer or small investor would be hardly worthy of consideration.

QUAINT FEATURES OF LIFE.

James Clarke, who is serving a term in the Maryland penitentiary for bigamy, is known to have been married fifty-five times. He is said to be one of the smoothest talkers that ever waggled a tongue.

Spiders "by the millions," according to the Board of Health of Southport, Me., have taken possession of a house recently occupied by Mrs. Julia Pierce, a widow of that village. She doesn't occupy the house now because the spiders have made it uninhabitable. No methods yet tried have succeeded in materially reducing the numbers of the pests, though thousands of them have been destroyed.

A Chicago woman waded into the lake chin deep with the evident intention of drowning herself. A young man named Oscar Fitzsimmons caught her in the act, leveled a shotgun at her and told her he would blaze away if she did not come in out of the wet. The bluff went and the young lady waded ashore again. This reminds one of the ancient story of a man who sallied forth with a rope to hang himself. While he was tying the rope to a tree he spied a bull making for him and for years used to go every morning to buy a drink there for himself and for the proprietor. The latter returned the compliment at

the death of William S. Pontin, who kept a little restaurant on Franklin street, New York, will probably result in the closing of a place as famous in its way as Delmonico's. Many a celebrated man has eaten a meal in Pontin's "little back room" and the proprietor's eccentricities were one of the features of the place. He was on friendly terms with a rival who opened another restaurant near him and for years used to go every morning to buy a drink there for himself and for the proprietor. The latter returned the compliment at

Pontin's place every evening and the same 25-cent piece was used for a long time to buy the drink, passing back and forth until Pontin finally framed it.

Frederick Hooper, a student at the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville, created a sensation among the 400 pupils recently by suddenly regaining his sense of hearing. He is a son of Joseph Hooper, a well known farmer of Boyle county, Kentucky. Several years ago he suddenly lost his hearing, power of speech remaining, and entered the school for the deaf. He was making fine progress when his hearing returned as mysteriously as it left him.

Mrs. Benson, with her husband and 6-year-old daughter, live near Barton, Wis. When the forest fire recently swept down upon that place the husband was in Minneapolis and his wife was alone with her child on a little farm four miles away from town. Seeing the approach of the flames and recognizing the impossibility of flight this lonely woman went to work to save the life of her daughter and herself. Her coolness never deserted her. She plowed furrows about the house, and when the roaring onslaught of flame leaped these as easily as a hunter's horse would leap a hedge, she buried the child in a potato patch where there was but little fuel for the flames and, lying down beside her, tossed a water-soaked cloak around them both. They were found terribly burned, but in a condition that gives every hope of perfect recovery.

Mrs. Samuel P. Swartwood of Mountain Top, Pa., is the mother of twenty-four children. Five of the children are dead. But Mrs. Swartwood's dinner horn can still accommodate to the table nineteen children, her husband, two sons-in-law, one daughter-in-law and two grandchildren. To be mother of twenty-four children is no small achievement, and Mrs. Swartwood is proud of it. "My children," she says, "are my greatest blessing." Mrs. Swartwood is only 60 years old, pleasant-faced and genial, round and jolly, with a great capacity for laughter and a happy disposition, which shows that frequent motherhood has not damaged her temper.

WHEN ONE IS YOUNG. Chicago Record. When one is young what matters care? For youth has mirth and joy to spare. The future is a blazing fire, That lights the pathway of desire, And that's the way to fame and fortune, And that's the way to a name for fame.

What smiling masks the grim faces wear, The best seems easy to acquire, When one is young.

Youth is a multi-millionaire, Who fattens on the best of fare; Whom all desire and none can touch, Who treats the world as his employe. But old age sets its fatal snare, When one is young.

A Minister Happily Surprised. Rev. J. T. Bays, pastor of the Christian church at Nonesuch, Kan., has a little boy who was afflicted with rheumatism in the knee. Rev. Bays says: "It was so bad at times that my son was unable to put his foot to the floor. We tried in vain every thing we could hear of, but for years would help him. We almost gave up in despair, when some one advised us to try Chamberlain's Pain Balm. We did so and the first bottle gave so much relief that we got a second one, and, to our surprise, it cured him sound and well."